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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 31 July 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 30 July 1996, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 55, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 30 July 1996 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 22 July 1996 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot Chargé d'affaires a.i. at the United Nations in connection with the visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus of His Excellency Necmettin Erbakan, the Prime Minister of Turkey, with a delegation of Turkish dignitaries (A/50/1013-S/1996/590 dated 23 July 1996). The visit took place at the invitation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, on the occasion of the 20 July Peace and Freedom Day celebrations.

I wish to stress, at the outset, that the relations between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are deeply rooted in a common history, culture and kinship and are based on reciprocal recognition and mutual respect between two independent States. These relations have not only withstood the vicissitudes of time and circumstance, but have also strengthened in the face of the decades long campaign of the Greek Cypriot side, in collaboration with Greece to make Cyprus a Greek province (enosis). This armed campaign, which had started in the mid-1950s and resurged in 1963, finally culminated in the Greek Junta's coup d'état of 15 July 1974 against the regime of the late Archbishop Makarios, who was overthrown by the Junta for acting slow on the question of enosis.

Turkey had to intervene on 20 July 1974 in order to rescue the beleaguered Turkish Cypriots, who had been subjected to a severe campaign of ethnic cleansing in the preceding 11 years, and faced certain extermination at the hands of the invading Greek army and its proxies in Cyprus during the coup d'état (see Archbishop Makarios' statement openly accusing Greece of invading Cyprus, contained in the verbatim record of the 1780th meeting of the Security Council (S/PV.1780 of 19 July 1974)).

Turkey's legitimate intervention, undertaken in accordance with the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960, saved the Turkish Cypriots from final extermination, stopped the killing of Greek by Greek during the coup d'état, protected the binational independence of Cyprus and led to the downfall of the military junta in Greece. It also laid the foundation for a just and durable settlement of the Cyprus question on a bicommunal, bizonal federal basis.

The Turkish Cypriots have since celebrated the anniversary of this historic turning point in their struggle for survival, freedom and dignity, which they appropriately call Peace and Freedom Day. As an expression of their gratitude to Turkey, which has sacrificed its sons so that the Turkish Cypriots may live in security, freedom and peace, they have always invited Turkish officials to share with them this most significant moment in their history, which, as an equal people in Cyprus with their own independent, sovereign State, it is clearly their prerogative to do, as it is to invite whoever they chose to visit the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Prime Minister Erbakan's visit to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus with other high-level Turkish officials on the above occasion, in the context of the special relations that exist between the two countries, is symbolic of Turkey's continuing commitment to the security and well-being of the Turkish Cypriot people. At the same time, Turkey's presence in Cyprus as a Guarantor Power is an asset for a peaceful solution, evidenced by the fact that it has preserved peace and stability in the island in the last 22 years. Within this spirit Prime Minister Erbakan's message during his visit was one of reconciliation, peace and friendship between the two peoples of the island. The Greek Cypriot side's protestations over this visit, therefore, are totally unwarranted and emanate from its unfounded claim to be the sole sovereign authority over the whole island, which is the real provocation and an impediment to a peaceful solution.

It is ironic that the same Greek Cypriot administration, which criticizes visits by Turkish officials to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, has not only frequently hosted officials from Greece in the past, but is currently preparing to host none other than Mr. Costas Simitis, the Prime Minister of Greece. It is reported that he will be accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Greek Foreign and Defence Ministers. The visit is planned for 28 September-1 October 1996 on the occasion of the so-called "Cyprus Independence Day", which itself is a historical fallacy.

It is our strongly held view that rather than trying to create a furor over matters which are strictly within the purview of each national people in Cyprus and their respective independent States, the Greek Cypriot side would do well to engage the Turkish Cypriot side in negotiations for a peaceful resolution of the Cyprus question. As is known, President Denktaş has recently sent an invitation to Mr. Glafcos Clerides, the leader of the Greek Cypriot community, to meet with him and try to resolve the Cyprus issue through dialogue and negotiation. It is hoped that Mr. Clerides will reconsider his decision not to accept President Denktaş's peace offer, and adopt a positive approach to direct negotiation for a just and lasting settlement.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 55, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus